

Cape Schools Open Minds and Open Doors

Community • Academics • Passion • Ethics

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December 10, 2020

Dear Cape Elizabeth School Department Community,

This letter is to introduce a new option for preliminary testing of students and staff who develop COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. Testing is considered an important public health measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19. This is in addition to the other public health measures already in place in our schools such as wearing face coverings, social distancing, and hand washing. The Cape Elizabeth School Department has opted into a new State of Maine program that provides a limited number of Abbott BinaxNOW Ag Tests to be used in schools.

We are asking parents/guardians to give us permission to test their student so that we are prepared if and when testing might be needed. This will allow us to respond quickly and provide tests for students with symptoms of COVID-19. The BinaxNOW test provides results in 15 minutes and can be used for early detection of COVID-19 in students, staff and teachers. This test option is considered a pre-screening tool and does not replace a medical evaluation.

Students and staff should not come to school if they are having symptoms. They should not come to school to obtain a COVID-19 test. They should continue to do the daily pre-screening checklist and stay home if they have any possible COVID-19 symptoms. The program specifies that the tests are ONLY for students/staff who develop some of the following signs and symptoms during the school day.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fever or chills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• new loss of taste or smell
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cough	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• sore throat
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• shortness of breath or difficulty breathing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• congestion or runny nose
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• nausea or vomiting
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• muscle or body aches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• diarrhea
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• headache	

All testing will be administered based on the judgment of the school nurse. Parent/Guardians will be notified. Students may be dismissed from school regardless of decision to test and/or test results. Further medical evaluation may be recommended.

We are required to report both positive and negative results to the Maine CDC.

Parent/Guardian Consent form: Please read and complete the permission form, available on the “forms” menu tab of the [PowerSchool Parent Portal](#). Forms should be completed by December 17, 2020 if you plan to participate in this program. Please contact the school nurse if you need a paper copy of the form.

This permission form will stay in your child’s health file (for one year) and only be used if testing is needed.

Additional information in the event testing needs to take place at school:

- There will be no charge to families for testing.
- This allows the school nurse conducting the test to gently swab the nostrils (½ to ¾) of your child if symptoms are present as directed by the Maine CDC.
- Students over the age of 12 may have the capacity to self-swab with supervision, while school nurses will collect the specimens for children under the age of 12.
- The school nurse will be in communication with the parent/guardian of anyone tested and results will be shared with the parent/guardian. If a student is negative, the parent/guardian will receive an email/phone call with results. If a student is positive, the parent/guardian will receive an email/phone call from the school and the student will be referred to their primary care physician for follow up.
- Both positive and negative test results will also be reported to Maine CDC as required by the state.
- Students who do not have completed forms on file cannot be tested at school.
- Parents/guardians that opt out of school testing will need to arrange testing through their primary care provider or other testing site if directed to do so by the Maine CDC.
- School staff will be in communication about other related issues such as whether students should to continue to come to school, or isolate/quarantine expectations, etc.
- Link to more information about the [Abbott BinaxNOW Ag Tests](#)

Thank you so much for your help in completing and returning this form. By doing so, you are making sure that testing for your student is not delayed. If you have questions, please contact your school nurse.

Here’s to a healthy school year!

Sincerely,

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